

3 x 5 ✓

## UNION COUNTY

### TOWNS AND VILLAGES

*How about St. Ambrose, an early Catholic Mission?*

✓ HENSHAW, <sup>has</sup> a town of 250 inhabitants, <sup>and is</sup> in the west-central part of the county, <sup>at</sup> ~~forms~~ the junction of Highways 85 and 130, <sup>about 12 miles north of Sturgis,</sup> The Illinois Central Railroad serves the town, <sup>which</sup> The town was named <sup>for</sup> after William Henshaw, a pioneer settler who was one of the county's largest farmers and who built the first house in the place. ~~Henshaw lies about 12 miles north of Sturgis.~~ The postoffice was established in Henshaw in 1887. The house ~~first~~ <sup>and</sup> built by Mr. Henshaw was a log and frame building of two rooms, <sup>and</sup> has been remodeled and is still occupied. In 1887, E.B. Mitchell built and furnished without compensation a small building on his farm to be used as a school. Mrs. Susan Bell Riggs Mitchell, his daughter-in-law, was employed at a very small salary to teach the school. In this school room was an infant's cradle, in which Mrs. Mitchell's child, Spalding Mitchell, reposed while her mother taught. In 1903, a three room school building was erected, but since 1937 the grade school pupils of the town have gone to Grove Center and the high school students to Sturgis by bus. The town contains the usual assortment of general stores, with a flour mill, grain elevator and bank. There are about 30 residences in the place and one church of the Christian denomination. Two fires, in 1923 and again in 1936, destroyed considerable property. The people are mainly engaged in farming interests.

✓ GROVE CENTER, is nearly in the ~~exact~~ center of Union County, on the (180 pop.) Illinois Central Railroad and Highway 130. It is about six miles from Morganfield. Isaac Hooper cleared and farmed a large tract of land in this section before the advent of the railroad. William Hooper owned the first

Grove Center, cont.

store. The postoffice was established in 1887. Until 1901, the children of Grove Center attended school in a log building on Dyer Hill, about one mile away. The first school building in town was a one room school, but at the present time the place has a modern three room brick schoolhouse with gymnasium. All highschool students go to Morganfield or Sturgis by bus. In 1914, a grain elevator was built ~~and operated in the town~~. The two churches in the place are the Baptist and Methodist. The town contains about twenty homes. The general occupation is farming.

✓ GRANGERTOWN, a town of 340, is located one mile from Sturgis, in the southern part of the county on Highway 85. The town was named after Andrew M. Grainger, the settlement being named Graingertown, later spelled Grangertown. Mr. Grainger was born on Tradewater River. He settled in Union County in 1880, married and built a house near the present site of the town. In <sup>1880</sup> 1894, the Cumberland Coal ~~and~~ Company opened a ~~coal~~ mine near by and built a tram road for the transportation of coal to the river, at Caseyville. The old grist and saw mill built by Andrew M. Grainger, father to Andrew, in 1844, was operated until it was destroyed by an explosion. The town contains a few stores, about 100 homes, and a Baptist church. The school is merged with the Sturgis school, and the students are provided with free transportation. Many of the men are employed in the mines.

✓ BUFFALO CITY (Commercial Point), <sup>(pop. 145)</sup> a small hamlet on Tradewater River in the southern part of the county, <sup>near to Sturgis,</sup> some years before the War-between-the States was a trading point on the Tradewater. The old log house of L.L. Talbott still stands on the 500 acre Talbott farm. This house was credited with being a place of entertainment for the boys of the neighborhood who congregated there

✓ Buffalo City- cont

in great numbers. In early days it was discovered that a two inch vein of salt lying two or three feet under the surface in this district attracted buffalo and deer which licked the earth in many places. Thus the name, Buffalo City, or Buffalo Lick, originated. Another name was Crossroads. It has been a hamlet since about 1860, and at that time contained three families; the Mitch, Reynolds and Smallwoods. Later there was a small Christian church, a store and blacksmith shop and more houses. In 1870, Augusta Talbott selected the name of Commercial Point for the place, and by this name it was incorporated. The first police judge was Bailey Cowan. By 1881, the place contained a number of stores, a saw and planing mill, a flour mill, and a tobacco factory. A small frame school building was erected to be replaced in later years by a brick building. In the early years of river navigation, boats came down the Tradewater and continued on as far as New Orleans, but this stream is rapidly filling up.

✓ BOXVILLE (pop. 250) is in the eastern part of the county, about seven miles east of Morganfield, on Highways 56 - 141. The origin of the name is unique: a shoemaker by the name of Lincoln Agin moved into the community and began business in a little box of a house. His place was called the box house, in ridicule, but as he made a success of his trade the town was eventually named, Boxville. During the decade of 1850-60, Agin and David Springer bought the first five acres for the town. Springer erected a general merchandise store. In 1870, Agin built a tobacco factory which was considered the best in that section. Stores were built by James Taylor, Spencer Sigler and Henderson Raley. The county's oldest resident, Mrs. Lucy Moore, aged 102 on November 1, 1940, lives at Boxville. The first schoolhouse in the town was in a one room building with Professor M.J. Underwood as teacher. In 1886, an addition was

## Boxville - cont.

made to the building and it has been enlarged several times since. In 1937, the Boxville school was merged with the Morganfield school, students being transported by bus. The town has a modern grade-school building, erected in 1938. A large community building, the first of its kind in the State, costing \$52,000, for local sports, entertainments and gatherings, was erected through the instrumentality of Dr. C.I. Harris, in 1925. The post-office was established in 1884. Two rural routes run out from Boxville. The town is the residence of several physicians the most prominent of whom is Dr. Harris, in practice there since 1904. Born and reared in Boxville, Dr. Harris is one of the communities most valued citizens.

( March 24, 1883, the State Legislature incorporated the Boxville Male and Female Seminary, naming the principal and trustees. No information on this.)

✓ 100 BORDLEY, a small hamlet about seven miles east of Sturgis, near the Webster county line, was a postoffice about 1840 Or 1845. The first postmaster was Bordley Ross, who then lived in front of the present site of the Odd Fellows cemetery. For some reason, his first name was adopted as the name of the postoffice and village. After a few years a small store was opened by Pete Woodring, about two miles from the postoffice. This store marked the present site of Bordley. William J. and R.A. Mart came to Bordley before the War-between-the-States. R.A. Mart bought 114 acres of land from W.L. Williams, in 1860, becoming postmaster in that year. The Mart brothers established a general store, including transportation service, teams and wagons to haul

habbo house and built fine homes in Bordley.



✓ Bordley- cont-

In 1919, the Baptist Church, called Zion, moved and established itself at Pride. The coming of the Illinois Central Railroad through the county was the beginning of the decline of Bordley, left two miles off the line. Some of the houses were removed intact to Pride. The school, known as the Woodring school, on what is now Highway 141, an old log building, was abandoned and the pupils taken to Pride. The highschool students attend at Sturgis.

The once important town was reduced to less than a dozen homes being mostly occupied by farmers. The postoffice was closed and a rural route opened from Clay. The Off Fellows cemetery was opened in 1881, and enlarged by six acres in 1905. ~~The Zion Baptist meetinghouse, a log structure, was built on a lot~~

*Get Material.*

BORDLEY- On March 18, 1850, Matthew C. Christian sold a tract of land and the deed reserved a spot on which to build a meeting-house. The first log building of the Zion Baptist Church was built in 1843. In 1857, James Wallace sold this land and reserved one acre on the closing line opposite the meeting house now on the premises. The later building was erected in 1863 on the old site, and was abandoned in 1919, when Zion Church was removed to Pride. When the Christian (Disciples) Church was organized, the congregation first worshipped in the Zion Baptist building. This group erected a frame building in in 1879, at a cost of about \$1,200.

( Statement on churches from combined Union Co. History and reporter's notes.)

was erected by Dr. J.W. Watson, who used much of the lumber in its construction from that salvaged from the old schoolhouse at Bordley. T.J. Hearin operated the first store. Two schools on either side of Pride; Hammack's and Wright's, were discontinued and a modern school building was built at Pride in 1917. A highschool was soon established which continued until 1937. At the present

✓ Pride - cont.

time the highschool students go either to Sturgis or Morganfield. In 1918, the Zion Baptist Church at Bordley moved bodily to Pride. The railroad, bringing a boom to the community as an outlet to farm products, began to lose business with the advent of highway trucks and on December 16, 1939, the last train was run and the rails removed. The present town of Pride consists of not over a dozen homes, two business houses, with the greater part of the men engaged in farming.

✓ Spring Grove (insert)

*late material*  
In the old History of Union County, published in 1886, Spring Grove is described as an attractive little village situated in a hollow, and upon the sides of a picturesque ravine that opens upon a flat. It was five or six miles from the Shawneetown Ferry, on the lower Morganfield and Shawneetown road.

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to his home. Blue's pond, where an engagement took place in the War-between- the-States, in in the vacinity. James Stanfield, an Englishman, opened a coal mine at Spring Grove in 1861. This industry increased the size and activities of the town. Thomas Perrine opened a blacksmith shop and Mack Padgett opened and operated a grist mill. A Presbyterian church was erected on the hill above Spring Grove, the building still standing. The Woodland Baptist Church was constituted at an early date. In 1886, the McMurray general store was started in the town which has continued in business until the present time. The first tiny school building was replaced in 1934 by a four room and auditorium building. It employs four teachers. The town now contains only about ten residences.

LITTLE UNION, located in the east-central part of the county about three miles southeast of Morganfield, on Highway 56, was at one time quite a thriving little village. A log school house was erected at an early date. The Baptist church was constituted in 1860, and the meeting-house was erected in 1866. The first blacksmith shop and grist mill were probably operated by Douglas Alton. T.S. Barker and Jim Grissom operated a general merchandise store. The early postoffice at this place was instituted through the influence of Frank Hass and the official name was Ula. It remained for several years.

ARNOLD STATION, in the part of the county, was a railroad station on the Morganfield and Atlanta Railroad, built in 1905, with no settlement there or residences other than farm houses. Most of the railroad right-of-way was obtained from the farm of Newton Arnold. After the establishment of the station, Bain Holeman and Sam and Fred Arnold started a general merchandise store and acted as agents for the purchase of hay and grain to be shipped by rail. The settlement of Arnold Station existed but a few years and business ceased long before the railroad ceased to operate, which was in 1940. Today, it is simply a farming community.

CULLEN, at one time a town on the old dirt road from Bordley and Morganfield in the south-central part of the county, was about two miles from Pride. At the present time there is no settlement there excepting six or eight houses and one small store and a broom factory operated by John Heffington. It is said that at one time this place was at one time Weaver City, named in honor of

OWLTOWN, a small hamlet in the bottoms of Highland Creek near the bridge on the old Henderson and Morganfield Railroad which existed prior to 1830, was swept out by a flood in 1832 or 1833. The place contained only a small store and blacksmith shop, with a few houses.

LINDLE'S MILL, at one time a hamlet on what is now the road to Calloway's Mine, about one-half mile from U.S. Highway 60, was the site of a grist mill erected in 1864, by J.W. Lindle. A store was operated there, also a blacksmith shop owned by Jim Heady. Back of the mill was the Mt. Pleasant Presbyterian Church and the school built on the church property. With the building of the railroad ~~and~~ and the development of Sturgis and Sullivan this hamlet was wiped out with nothing to indicate its existence excepting an old graveyard. The church was moved to Sullivan.



HITESVILLE, about 9 miles north-east of Morganfield, on Highway 359, in the  
(pop, 150)  
northeast section of Union County, including the precinct of that name, was  
originally contained in three military surveys. The first,  
was ceded to Colonel Grundy by Virginia in recognition of services in the  
Revolution. The one adjoining was given to Captain Thompson in return for  
similar services. These were the two largest surveys. The county at that time  
was heavily timbered. Only a few "squatters" were living on the principal  
trails. Such men as Murrell, the Vincents, the Masons, the Jeemes', the  
Carters and the Moulders constituted the original inhabitants. It is  
supposed that lead was obtained from a mine opened on Highland Creek, in  
the northern portion of the precinct, and from another vein four miles above  
Uniontown. Other early settlers were Joseph Buckman, Robert Wimsatt, the  
Hites, the Scotts. The father of Judge Strother Chapman (dead in 1886)

UNION COUNTY- TOWNS

10

Hitesville-cont-

made the first clearing in the tract owned by R.D. Willet.

H.P.H.

PREFACE

Persons employed on Project

Mrs. Sarah D. Young - Foreman

Reporters

|                       |                    |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| 1 Katherine F. Berry, | <u>Morganfield</u> |
| 3 Virgil Cartwright,  | <u>Morganfield</u> |
| 9 Mary L. Smith,      | <u>Uniontown</u>   |
| 5 Kate L. Hart,       | <u>Uniontown</u>   |
| 7 Allyne M. Omer,     | <u>Morganfield</u> |
| 8 Nammie G. Reynolds, | <u>DeKoven</u>     |
| 10 Ruth K. Steward,   | <u>Caseyville</u>  |
| 2 Geo. T. Brown,      | <u>Clay</u>        |
| 6 Nora F. Jackson,    | <u>Caseyville</u>  |

Typist

4 Beulah Hancock, Sturgis

"Boxtown" at Uniontown.

Source of information,  
Miss Iva Harris, Uniontown.

"Boxtown".

The upper or northern part of Uniontown is, and has been known for a number of years as "Boxtown".

This part of town was inhabited principally by negroes and received its name from the many small box houses of which this section was composed at that time, later as the negroes prospered they built better houses and a number of white people have moved there .

The Highland Creek Coal Co, is situated in that part of Uniontown called "Boxtown", and is now running six days per week, nearly all the negroes and a number of white people are employed at this mine.

Since rebuilding after the 1937 flood, Boxtown has had even better homes, and today presents an attractive and prosperous appearance.

In the early days of Uniontown the lower part of the corporate limits and along the railroad track below the city limits, was known as Oklahoma, but with the passing of time this name was discarded and very few people of the town today ever heard of a part of the city being called Oklahoma.



Communities,

(typed-5-9-41)  
Reported by:  
Nannie G. Reynolds,  
DeKoven, Kentucky.

✓ Owltown. Nothing further can be found about Owntown.

✓ Cullen. (Source of information (Red] John Heffington). Yes brooms are still made in Cullen by John Heffington.

✓ Pride . (source of information G. B. Carter, Pride, Ky) The Pride of today consists of two business houses, one operated by G. B. Carter and T. J. Herron; 1 blacksmith shop owned and operated by A. L. Christeson; Baptist Church; one public school and not over a dozen homes. A large percent of the male population are engaged in farming. Like other small towns dependent on the railroad for its rise, it consequently fell with the decline of the railroad.

✓ Spring Grove . Spring Grove is only a little country village consisting of one store operated by W. T. McMurray; a graded school; one church (Presbyterian) and about ten homes. Nearly all of the families are farmers.

[The spring has long since been filled up.] - 3 x 5 = ✓

✓ The date of 1880 is correct. Mrs Wight says the Postoffice has been there longer than that. (Source of information, Mrs. Fred Wight, DeKoven)

✓ Little Union. Little Union is a country settlement consisting of a blacksmith shop, county school, Baptist Church and several dwellings.

Curlew. The Curlew mine has been abandoned and all company property moved away, so no town really now exists. Harth Brothers own the mineral rights.

*see Lake*

### River Life

The following lengthy quotations pertain to various phases of river life on the Ohio. If they can be applied to any of the Union County river towns give sufficient explanations so that they can be used, at least in part as a quotation in, say, the history of Caseyville or Uniontown. In other words, do or did a number of river houseboats ever tie up at Uniontown? If so, what kind of place can they be given in its history? Is there any record of the type of woodcutter who supplied boats with fuel in the early days of boating? Transfer as much of this material as possible to the setting of a Union County river town and give sufficient detail to give it a touch of authenticity.

Waverly,  
Source of information,  
Mary B. Pike.

(date written 11-1-40)  
( " typed -11-4-40)  
Reported by:  
Mary L. Smith, Uniontown.

### Waverly.

The history of the village of Waverly may prove interesting to many, even from the very beginning. The land on which it was founded was a part of what was known as the "Big Spring Tract" which extended along Casey Creek and from there to the Smith Hill. From the foundation it has had its quota of trades people and professional men, such as merchants of various kinds, physicians, carpenters, shoemakers, blacksmiths, millers, druggists, lawyers, barbers, bankers, coal miners, also warehouses, tobacco factory tile factory, hotels, bar rooms and distilleries, now oil stations garages, dance halls and a hatchery.

Before there was even as much as a hut built there, this special spot was known as "Crossroads", because the Henderson and Beaverdam road crossed the Madisonville road at the Tom Smith's place.

Another and later name for it was "Donnelly's Store". John and Arthur Donnelly and their mother from Ireland came traveling down this Madisonville road peddling, until they came to Crossroads, where they pitched their tents and camped. They built a little log cabin, for a store, on the spot where George Smith now lives. They also built a dwelling and lived there about two years; hence the name "Donnelly's Store".

Then again it was called "Paynesville", after Mr. Jack Payne one of the most primitive settlers.

It was in 1869 or '70 that the "Crossroads" received the appellation of Waverly. The Big Spring Tract of land was thrown on the market. Mr. Hugh McElroy was the agent. The land was divided into farms of one hundred and twenty-five acres. At Crossroads thirty lots of an acre each were laid off and sold to the highest bidders. Then Mr. McElroy knowing the place must have a name to have a Post Office suggested the name of Waverly as there was no other Post Office by that name in the State.

However the place continued without a Post Office for four or five years longer. In most cases the mail would be directed to Sacred Heart Chapel at St. Vincent and Rev. E. J. Durbin would at his own expense and trouble bring the mail to the chapel and distribute on Sundays. Not until 1875 did the people of Waverly conclude they were behind time and begin negotiations with the officials of the U. S. Capital to have a Post Office established.

To return to the buildings; Another small house was built opposite Donnelly's by Nathaniel Floyd, who used it as a store for a year or so, when both properties were bought by Smauel Willett, then sold in 1820 to Horace Bell, who used Donnelly's store as a cabinet shop. Horace Bell sold to Wash Abell of Marion County.



who built the dwelling now standing in which George Smith and Sisters now live and used the Floyd Store as a blacksmith shop. After a few years he sold to John Smith and Gilky Rice. Thomas Smith assisted by John Vaott and Samuel Hosback continued to rehearse the "Anvil Chorus". The Smith heirs still own the property but the blacksmith shop is gone.

Dread Powell, an old colored slave, who ran away from the state long before Emancipation time built the next dwelling now owned by C. J. Cruz. The two front rooms are log, and are still standing.

The next business house was built about 1835 by Dr. Chesire, a son-in-law of Jack Payne. The timbers were hand hewn, the lumber was gotten out by hand and sawed with a whipsaw. It was a very firm, solid wind proof house. Mr. Jim Roberts the only tailor of which the town can boast bought the building and rented it out to different ones as a store.

At one time Waverly had a steam flouring mill known as the Big Spring or Waverly Mill. The mill was shipped from St. Mary, Marion County, by E. A and D. O. Byrne to be located at Highland Church on their father's farm. The people of Waverly always progressive, wishing the mill located in their town offered the owners one thousand dollars to bring it to Waverly and they did in 1870. It was a flour and corn mill under the name of Byrne & Byrne. Later the Big Spring Mill was changed into a distillery. The distillery made fifty barrels of apple brandy and went into bankruptcy in 1874. It was again used as a distillery and about a thousand barrels of excellent whiskey run off, when Mr. Sylvester Pike had to take back the property for the fourth time. Mr. Pike sold it again and the machinery was moved to Morganfield, known there as Kelsey and Cronwell Mill. On 1884 Philip Greenwell operated a small corn mill and it changed hands many times and operated many years. There is no mill in Waverly at present but the Big Spring is still in use.

The first Physician ever located in Waverly was Dr. William Dunham about 1840. Following him was Dr. A. J. Abell, Dr. Herman Rhea Sr. Dr. Herman Rhea Jr. Dr. J. T. Jenkins, Dr. T. J. Newman, Dr. R. N. Alvey, Dr. J. B. Hearey, Dr. J. E. Johnson, Dr. W. E. Hardesty and Dr. T. P. Gray.

In the life of Waverly it has been in about four locations. The town being at Crossroads. Then Alex and Charles King built a store opposite where Paul Hagan now lives, up the first land at the left of the Highway as you go into Waverly from Morganfield, and King's Store became the center of the town instead of Crossroads. In the next move Austin, Biggs and Franey bought a building opposite where Spring Mill's Gas Station is on the Highway, made additions to it and it became the main store of the town known as Waverly Merchandise Co. Then later it moved down the Highway to its present location.

#### COAL MINES

Information, by R. A. Gardner.

One of the main industries in Waverly at one time was coal mining. The coal mines was organized in 1904 by a home committee, consisting of



Dr. J. E. Johnson, President, W. T. Barker, Secretary and other prominent citizens as S. R. Hamilton, John T. Payne and John W. Cruz. They decided Waverly needed a coal mine, for in those days they did not have the improved roads they have now and it was hard to get coal in bad weather. Sam Pike, magistrate of Waverly at that time gave his time and assistance to help get the coal mines in the locality.

Mr. Ben Hancock superintended the sinking of the shaft and R. A. Gardner was engineer of the mine. This mine employed around one hundred men. Due to Mismanagement of different operations it proved unprofitable and was abandoned in 1923, picked up again and operated a few years and closed entirely in 1929.

Information by Mary B. Pike.

At present Highway #60 runs through Waverly, also the I. C. R.R line passes through the village. They have electric lights, dial telephones, Catholic Church and School, K. of C. Hall, Post Office, oil stations, garage, restaurant, grocery stores, department store, blacksmith shop, dance-halls, a hatchery, two physicians and a fine bank.

The Waverly Bank was incorporated in 1902. The first president was, G. L. Drury. W. T. Barker, Cashier and Mary P. Pike, Assistant Cashier. Mr. G. L. Drury was succeeded by H. A. Roberts. At present W. R. Johnson, President, Sam W. Kellen, Cashier and Catherine Barker Ass't Cashier.

The present Post Office building was erected in 1929.

#### Interesting Building.

Information, Mrs. John Willett.

There is a very interesting building going up in Waverly at present. This is being built by a man in his seventies. Mr. E. J. Hancock, out of tin cans and bottles. Mr. Hancock has three goats and a small wagon. He hitches one of his goats to the wagon gets on it and goes out in search of material for the house. These tin cans and bottles he cements together in various ways, some bottles standing others lying down. When asked why he did not place them uniform he replied "women make crazy quilts why not made a crazy house". He is building three rooms, one very good size room and two smaller shed rooms. He has nearly three sides completed. The cans he uses are mostly beer cans and motor oil cans. The roof is made of cans placed over rubberoid roofing. In the largest room he has a fireplace and chimney built of cans and bottles. Above the fire place in several of the bottles he has some family pictures, also a small glass jar cemented in so as to serve as a match holder. It is a curiosity to see and many people come to see Mr. Hancock and his building.

DeKoven Questionnaire -A-  
Source of information:  
Census Bureau Washington, D.C.  
Shawneetown Quadrangle  
Union County Advocate,  
John Syers, DeKoven.

typed -4-26-41  
Reported by:  
Hannie G. Reynolds,  
DeKoven, Kentucky.

DeKoven Questionnaire A.

1. Will do my best, think I have spotted someone to make it.
2. Never was an incorporated town.
3. Haven't heard from Washington D. C. yet.
4. (source of information: Union County Advocate, Apr. 17 1924)

Mine Strike of District #23.

Approximately nine hundred men in Union County were affected by a strike order issued by Lonnie Jackson, president of district #23, United Mine Workers of America: 10,000 miners in Western Kentucky laid down their picks and shovels in compliance with this general strike order issued by Mr. Jackson in Central City, Ky., in the break between mine operators and miners that occurred at Louisville, Ky., in March at a wage scale conference. They began March 15th to effect a new wage scale, however they became hopelessly deadlocked and a strike was inevitable. The extension of the old wage scale contract expired on March 31, so the sub-committee composed of miners and operators adjourned announcing it was futile for them to carry on deliberations as they could not agree. W. G. Duncan, Pres. of the Western Kentucky Coal Operators Association, stated, "That after the break that the negotiations were discontinued at the demand of the operators".

The mine<sup>3</sup> gave an ultimatus they they would accept nothing but the so called Jacksonville Agreement, which was a three year contract continuing the present wage scale in the central district of which Western Kentucky field was not a part. Operators who were employed Union men had sought to effect reductions in wages to the 1917 scale, contending that conditions in the field were at a relative disadvantage, particularly in the matter of freight rates. The union men refused the reduction. The statement issued to the miners by the representatives headed by Duncan was as follows:

March 11, 1924, the representatives of the Western Kentucky Coal operators (not West Kentucky Coal Co) met with the representatives of district #23. U.M.W.A. for bargaining collectively at a wage scale contract effective April 1, 1924. Facts have been presented and we have reason to believe that you were convinced that Western Kentucky Coal operators could not continue under the present wage scale, in which the day labor is \$2.50 above the highest paid during the recent War. We showed you plainly the prohibitive freight rate barriers surrounding our field and the great competitive tonnage produced under alarmingly lower wage scale through out the very life of the West Ky. Coal field. Apparently these facts are as well known to you as to the coal operators and during the last few weeks and in communities in general in Western Kentucky, it has been <sup>our belief we could arrive at</sup> a proper wage settlement in the light of the facts and figures through the conferences.

Yesterday you delivered an ultimatum, the only proposition, you stated you had to offer, viz: The present prohibitive wage scale for a period of three years, your ultimatum thus removing the several questions from the realm of collective bargaining and offering us only a mandatory settlement based on conditions in the central competitive coal fields and not existing, and undisputed as facts of our own field.

An acceptance on our part of this the only proposition you advise or have authority to offer or accept, in our best judgement would definitely destroy the western Kentucky coal field, bringing great loss and distress to men and their families, to the companies and to the communities involved. ~~Under~~ such circumstance it is obvious to you and the public that we can not agree to your proposal. Mr. Duncan explained that between fifty or sixty mines with a normal output of 50,000 tons per day would be affected by the strike. He also said that individual operators would determine for them, <sup>each</sup> whether or not to try to operate their mines. He said his opinion was all Union Mines would close. ~~There~~ <sup>are</sup> some non-union mines in Western Kentucky, which are not affected by the strike, as the mines had



been operating very little in the last few weeks. Not averaging one day per week, The average of the whole district last year was 177 days per mine.

### The Wage Scale Parley

The wage scale parley of DeKoven was held at the mine office on March 30-1924. A. J. Morehead, President and General Manager, G. W. Lyman, General Supt and S. J. Merritt, Supt of Mine #11, met with a committee of miners chosen to represent the miners of this place. Purpose: to effect an agreeable wage scale. A. J. Morehead, Pres. of the Madison Coal Corp. was a broad-minded and congenial old fellow, realizing that the people were progressing and the town was enjoying a building boom, used every argument at his command to make the Union delegate see his point of view. The statement from Mr. Duncan was read. Mr. Morehead, stated, "that due to low seam of coal, the long hauling naturally making the labor cost higher than at some other mines, it was almost impossible for them to produce coal with overhead expense so great and to compete with mines with higher coal. You will understand that this is a very old mine and has already paid for itself. Some of our mines must go and this one is isolated and old, so we could buy our coal much more cheaply than we can produce it under the present conditions; however, out of sympathy with the community I am willing to cooperate in any way humanly possible". Mr. Morehead acted a gentleman throughout the whole conference, time and again he explained their position. Over and over, the Union delegates held out for the present wage scale. Mr. Morehead flatly refused and one of the delegates (now deceased) called the old man some horrid names. This made him angry and he shouted, "Let the d-- thing (meaning the mines) fill up to the grass roots" and that is what happened. Of course all the citizens hated to have their only means of livelihood taken away. The miners felt they would be traitors to their union to accept anything less than their demands. There was considerable lamentations among the community at large. No one thought the jolly old man meant what he said, but time



has proven that he did, for there are now moss and flowers growing around the sealed opening of Mine #11. After seventeen years of idleness we wonder if it wouldn't have been better to have been less radical and accepted a wage cut than to have taken what they did.

5. The altitude of DeKoven is 385 feet, by geological survey.
6. No.
7. (a) A small truck mine, owned by John Syers.  
(b) Yates brothers own mine property, coal rights have been leased.

Questionnaire B, "Dekoven History."

1. Peter Casey surveyed land in 1795, granted him for services rendered during the Revolutionary War. He located lands at the mouth of Highland Creek below the present site of Uniontown. At the mouth of Cypress Creek and near the mouth of Tradewater river there being some 15,000 acres in this tract, which extended on both sides of the river. Casey located the Tradewater lands because he believed coal to be in that vicinity, in 1827 he told his son Samuel Casey that he suspected coal in that neighborhood because of the resemblance to the Virginia coal fields.
- After completing their survey they returned to Virginia where they related ~~where they related~~ their findings to friends among whom was a youth named John Willworth<sup>whose</sup> father was English but his mother was of French descent. He being raised in France among French people, learned their language and acquired many of their traits.
- Later he came with a party of surveyors and explorers down the river on a flat boat, from Evansville, Ind. In the spring of 1839 they landed near the mouth of Tradewater river and proceeded up what is now called Hines Creek to a ridge where they made camp. A very short distance away they located an indian village nestled in a valley between two ranges of hills. On top of one of the highest hills was the burying ground and lookout post for the indian village below, and is still known as Indian Hill. The indian scouts were not long in discovering the new camp and being of peaceful nature made a friendly call. After greetings were exchanged they invited the white men to their village.
- As the youth named Willworth gazed at the indian village in the haze of an early spring dawn, he was dumfounded by the magnificent natural beauty of the scene and being a true lover of nature, it brought back the half forgotten memories of a home in sunny France, so his enraptured gaze lingered upon the scene he exclaimed softly "Dekoven" a French word loosely translated, meaning village or camp among the hills.

These men cleared and staked off a small tract of land, built a cabin or two, satisfied themselves that there was an abundant supply of coal here, but having no means to open a mine returned to Virginia. Willworth went to Pittsburgh, Pa., but returned here later and was Superintendent of mines. A mine was opened in 1843, but proved unprofitable and was soon abandoned. However, a settlement was started on the ridge and was jokingly called "Coon Ridge", because of an abundance of coons there. They were hunted by the men. Their meat used for food and their fur sold. This settlement which was really the beginning of DeKoven, was located behind what is now the Mine brothers farm about one half mile from present day DeKoven.

Saw milling, farming and truck gardening ~~was~~ the chief industry of the day. Some of the men worked on boats, others making brick in a near by brick yard. With the opening of the mines, mining absorbed all other industries of this community. Some of the pioneer families of this settlement were, Stradford Potts, Rance Caldwell, Jimmy Love, James Papps, Levi Dansey, Pete Coleman, Billy James, Tom Barnes, Henry Gill, Louis DuBasin, Bob Daniels, John Syers, Sr. (continue with the DeKoven History, beginning with: "DeKoven is a") In 1847 James H. Mulford and Mr. Tanbur opened a mine which was a failure. The stock holders formed a Company, calling themselves The Kentucky Coal Company, operating without a charter. They bought and leased vast quantities of land and ~~taxes~~ and began a series of mining ventures. March 2, 1874 articles of incorporation were granted to A. S. Shotwell, James E. Tyler, Arthur Peter, P. G. Aelsey and Jordan Giles and became known as The Shotwell Coal Mining Co.

3. In early days of the mining industry times were bad (as before stated) but as more efficient men took charge it began to show its possibilities of a great profitable industry. As new openings were made, of course a camp was built around it. As the openings were located at different points, hence DeKoven covered a large space of ground. The town in general was located about 3/4 miles from the railroad, which necessitated a mail carrier. With the advent of the railroad most of the settlement of



"Coon Ridge" moved across the tracks and thus this settlement was gradually abandoned. More homes were built in DeKoven. The mine operators enlarged property employing more men. The war caused a greater demand for coal. DeKoven mine was now producing more coal than before, much larger and better equipped mines in near by towns. Little more can be added to what I have already written about the rise and fall of this mining town. It's growth depended solely upon the mines. When all mining activities ceased the bustling and prosperous mining town became the sleepy little village that it is today.

4. Yes: This house was out of the ordinary for another reason, water was piped in the kitchen as early as 1883. Method: --A large cistern was dug on a hill behind the house, a pipe was placed in the side of the cistern near the bottom and run on down to the kitchen, which was in the downstairs part. As the cistern was higher than the lower floor of the house, ~~make~~ it was very easy for the water to run into the kitchen pipes, there it was controlled by faucets.
5. Yes
6. Yes, it was being used for a residence. It was the old one room school house built in 1847.
7. Henry C. Spencer moved to DeKoven in 1875. He farmed for awhile and soon became the owner of a Hotel called The Spencer House. This was a two story frame house with sixteen rooms, a cellar under the entire house, a large porch the full length of the house across the front, both upper and lower stories. He was noted for his excellent table and well kept house and always had a large patronage. This is one of the oldest houses of DeKoven. It was built by Leopold Harth about ninety years ago and is now occupied by Mrs. W. A. Hart, serving as a dwelling and dry goods store.
8. Leopold Harth moved to DeKoven in 1851 and operated a grocery store and butcher shop, later owned a hotel. He continued to be active in all branches of his business until his death in 1866.



9. From 1884 to 1889.
10. James E. Wathen learned the trade of brick masonry in Mason Co. He came to Union County in 1853, where he started this trade in which he was very successful. He entered the confederate Army in 1861 and returned to DeKoven in 1865.
11. Frederick C. Boettger, was born in Hanover Germany. He came with his parents to United States in 1846, settling in Saline Co. Ill. While living in Weston, when a very small boy he showed his business ability by buying eggs from the farmers at 5¢ per dozen and reselling them to the boat crews, that were passing on the river, for 15¢ or 20¢. He came to Union County in 1848. Entered the Federal Army in 1861, was mustered out in 1864. Returned to DeKoven and married in 1865, beginning his trade as blacksmith and mechanic. He was employed by the Shotwell Coal and Mining Co., in this capacity and continued throughout the succeeding years under various companies. When mine #11 owned by Madison Coal Corp closed in April of 1924, Mr. Boettger was head mechanic of the machine shops, a loyal worker, with 59 years of continuous service to his credit and was affectionately known as "Uncle Fred".
12. Thos J. Wolfe operated a sawmill and farmed in 1856. They pursued their trades, before, during and for some time after the Civil War.
13. Some of them came as early as 1843. All coming direct from Germany. Some stopped for a while in Pittsburgh, Pa. Others came to Evansville. They all spoke German. (One of these Germans came from France) A man born in Bavaria Germany named Henry Acker, embarked on a sail boat at Harve France for America in Nov. of 1851. On the 1st night of the voyage, his ship collided with another and he returned to France for repairs, which took ten days. The journey was then resumed. They encountered several severe storms in crossing the Atlantic. The storms became so severe after they entered the waters of the Mississippi river <sup>that they</sup> and signaled a pilot boat. They had to return to the gulf to avoid the storm. It was eight days before they reached the point at which they had returned to sea. They landed in New Orleans Jan. 23, 1852, fifty six days after the second embarkment at Harve

France. Mr. Acker hailed a steam boat and landed in Caseyville Feb. 10, 1852 and began work at the Mulford Mine. He lived in DeKoven the remainder of his life.

Henry Rhen , born in Germany, married Miss Lena Hurst in 1870, came to Union County in 1878, purchasing a seven acre, rocky farm in DeKoven. He planted four acres in vineyard and some in fruit trees. He was the first Union County man to construct and use an incubator. His first incubator held 247 eggs, out of which he hatched 197 chicks. He also constructed a brooder in which he artificially raised his chicks. In connection with his poultry and grape sales he owned and operated a slaughter yard.

John Zeiger(Syers) came to Union County in 1846 from Pittsburg Pa. His father was a shoemaker fresh from Germany, he with his family came on a flat boat bringing a huge chest in which were his precious shoe making outfit, the Bible, family records and a few treasured articles.

Jimmie Love, a youth, joined their party in Pittsburgh. After arrival a check up of the family finances, all they found was a \$20.00 bill sewed in the lining of the band of *Jimmie's trousers*. The Zeiger family spent all the money they had to get to America, except this \$20.00 bill.

German names most frequently encountered today in DeKoven vicinity are: Kirchner, Katten, Kaufman, Hurst, Gerner, Zeiger(Syers), Harth, Boottger, Pawmett, Acker, Lickengirth and Eisenbarth.

14. Most of the early settlers were German, one French and a few English.

The only place to worship was in the one room school house, where they joined in one purpose, that was worshiping God according to the dictates of their own conscience. They lived by the "Golden Rule". In spite of nationality and creed, they were a united people, who obeyed the commandment "Love thy Neighbor". Thus the Union Church was formed, composed of Baptists, Methodists, Christians and Lutherians, worshipping God in prayer song and praise and continuing in this manner for a number of years. German religious leaders from Crittenden County, who took part in these services

and revivals Homer Benton, Bob Adanson and Joey Hina. Meetings were held in later years in the Masonic Hall.

15. The Galangal Team was so called because the captain of the team, J. C. Durick was a maker of a liniment in which he used a powder made from galangal root. The finished product was called "Galangal Oil", thus the ball team was called "The Galangals".
16. Yes.
17. Yes it is spelled, Eissenbarth. Miss Minnie Eissenbarth is still living here.
18. No. All water is free. It is now the property of the Yates Brothers.
19. Have checked the date 1839, with and old diary of Dr. P. G. Kelsey and still contend it is correct.
20. In 1849 a three foot vein of coal was opened called Morehead Mine. In 1859 a 4ft., vein just forty feet below it was opened. It was called Shotwell Mine, so named for the principal stockholders. All Coal was brought to the surface through the same opening. (Early Mines). All mines in or around the DeKoven area have the veins that lie at a dip or slant of about three inches to the yard, making what is known as a slope mine, several cars can be taken from the mine at one time coupled one behind the other and brought to the surface by a hoist or engine.  
A level is completed of say 51,000 feet. At intervals of 50ft, rooms are laid off for the miners to work in. The miners begin work with a steel pick. Next to the floor of his room, he digs out a hole about two feet deep and four feet long, he then drills holes near the roof which is of slate. Just above the mines, he places powder in the drilled holes preparatory to a blast. The last thing in the evening before quitting work he lights a fuse that has been tamped in with the powder in the drilled holes then he runs to get away from the powder and smoke. Next morning he loads his coal in cars in his room and runs it out on the level or passage way in front of the rooms. Coal that was dug out with his pick was the nut, the lump was the result of the blast. Loaded cars standing on the level are gathered together by a man and a mule to be drawn to the surface.



In these early mines a mule drawn car was used, also a grass rope. In later years a stationary engine "hoist" was installed to which was attached a huge drum around which was wound 2000 feet of wire rope or cable, this was attached to empty cars and as the cars rolled down the slope the rope uncoiled and let the cars to the bottom of the slope the empty cars were put on the side track and the cable hooked to the front of the car, then they were drawn to the surface and up into the tippie and dumped in small cars to be taken to the river tippie, there loaded on barges.

The early miners used lamps closely resembling a tiny coffee pot, with a long spout in which the wick, made of cotton string, was placed. For lamp fuel they used lard oil (melted lard). A gallon of oil lasted the usual miner a month. In 1910 they began the use of carbide lamps a big improvement over the old oil lamps. Open lights are the only type lights ever used in these mines. In 1910 the Pittsburg Company installed ~~electricity~~ electricity in the #9 mine. That helped quite a lot but of course lamps were still a necessity for the miners to work by in their rooms.

21. Mr. Fanhur.

22. A stationary engine is an engine located on the surface to pull coal from the mine.

23. Sold data from history. Nothing left out. He did well to keep himself and family and keep up his religious work. He helped the community by being selfsupporting and not being a burden to the already overburdened people. By aiding in a spiritual way I think he helped the community in general.

24. March 16, 1926

25. Yes, a dummy engine was used when the mine closed in 1924 (but a larger one)

26. I mean hauling coal to the river by mule drawn cars was too slow. They could not get coal enough to the river to supply the demand. There was plenty of coal at the mine but the method of transportation was too slow Teriffic:- is the word. It is to be remembered that Shotwell Coal was a fine grade of coal and contained qualities not found in other coal. The south clamored for more coal. The steamboats demanded "Shotwell Coal" and for the times they did a huge business.



27. A Dinky or "Dummy" engine is a small locomotive.
28. Yes. The dummy line ran from the mine to the river.
29. Beginning in 1861 and continuing until mine closed.
30. The word Kentucky has been omitted in copying. The Old South Kentucky Charter was approved by Kentucky Legislature Mar. 15, 1871, for a railroad company. They went broke. In 1872 Dr. P. C. Kelsey obtained it, and when the talk of building a railroad was revived it was used. It being considered the most desirable to work under. It was amended and name changed to O.V.R.R. Company. These amendments became effective March 16, 1886 at the same time the Ohio Valley Railroad and Mining Co., was changed to Ohio Valley Coal and Mining Co.
31. No, date of 1878 is correct. (will try to obtain a picture)
32. The date should read 1878. F. & A. M. meant Free and Accepted Masons Two kinds of Masonry. York Masonry (25 degrees) (practiced entirely by *Junks*) "Scottish Rites" (33 degrees) This is composed of, Blue Lodge, (3 degrees) Highest degree in Master Mason: Royal Arch Chapter, 4th, 5th and 6th degrees: Council or Commandery; Knight Templar (remaining degrees) Malta; Shriner or 33rd degree. Quoting a high ranking mason of Sturgis "The Commandery is the most beautiful part of Masonry, based almost entirely on the Bible".
33. The Shrine or 33rd Degree.
- 34 34. G. W. Hoggle manager of the Ohio Valley Coal & Mining Co. general store, was musically minded. He noticed an unusual amount of local musical talent. In 1881 he organized a brass band, naming it The Concert Band. Some called it The Cornet" others the Concert and it has been called the DeKoven Cornet Concert Band". I suppose so as there were quite a few Germans in it. (This is Mrs. Reynolds <sup>idea</sup> of the "German Concert Band" idea, but we at the office don't quite understand, just what this is, but are of the opinion it might be an organization that covers a wide scope of county and organizes bands in various localities, but even that may be wrong.)
35. Was reorganized in 1884

36. No date is obtainable as to when they disbanded, however a Junior Band was organized under his direction and in later years still another. DeKoven has had three brass bands in its history.

Mr. Noggle's wife was a sister of Dr. P. C. Kelsey and a musician of great ability. Their son Percy Clayton Noggle, was a musical genius. When very young he arranged the stops on the reed organ to produce the sound of an expensive Pipe Organ. He also became famous for performing a feat of playing five musical instruments <sup>at same time</sup>, namely the harmonica, guitar, cimbale, bass drum and triangle. This unusual feat was performed in the following manner: the harmonica was fastened to his vest bosom by a frame that held in position before his mouth. On this he played the air, accompanying it by the guitar in his hands, with his right foot he worked a treadle to which was fastened a drum stick and a steel hoop which would strike the drum and cymbals simultaneously. A steel rod fastened to his left foot, struck the "triangle", which was suspended from a frame. This one ~~man~~ man band of five, was quite a feature in the Lyceum entertainments of Rev. J. P. Pitner, M. E. Minister of Evansville Ind., during the year of 1883, where Noggle attended business college. Besides this he was also an accomplished organist, violinist and played the cornet well.

37. After the arrival of railroad.

38. A room in school building.

39. Say cloak room then.

40. To build a school house on. He turned it over to County after the mines closed the county took over the school. Before that time a large percentage of the expenses were met by the citizens and was not solely dependant on the County as it now is. Mr. Cragon wanted the school near his home, that is why that site was selected.

41. Name of Denomination.

42. All homes were frame buildings, consisting of from four to ten rooms. Most of the dwellings were one story, some few wher two story. Some had brick foundations and some had basements. All were nice and comfortable. Some

were extra nice and one or two were extravagantly beautiful. Of the 24 new homes that were built by private individuals, only a small percentage now remain. Most of them were taken over by the Lumber Co, who built them and sold at a salvage sale at a drastic reduction, or torn down and moved away. When the mine closed here people were unable to meet their obligations and lost their homes. Several store buildings were sold and moved away. The company built 75 new five room houses in 1920-21, at a cost of approx. \$1300. each and sold for \$35. each in later years. All but tow of these houses have been moved away. Of the 25 four room houses built by the Co., in 1907 only two remain. Of the 10 four room houses built in 1903 only three remain. All property owned by The Madison Coal Corp in 1940, was sold to Yates Brothers.

43. C. M. Yates is magistrate of District #4 of Union Co. He and his brother Hope are farmers and extensive land owners and prominent citizens.

44. In 1911.

Source of information:  
Union County History.  
Jim Boettger  
Will Syers  
John Syers  
All of DeKoven, Ky.  
Old diary of P. G. Kelsey.

Reported by  
Hannie G. Reynolds,  
DeKoven, Kentucky.



A. E. F. Men, DeKoven, Curlew & Caseyville,  
Source of information:  
In The World War, (book)  
1917-1919

(typed-5- 1-41)  
Reported by:  
Nannie G. Reynolds,  
DeKoven, Kentucky.

A.E.F. - DeKoven.

Number in A.E.F. from DeKoven: 11

Killed in Action: Robert K. Curtis and Rufie Reese.

A.E.F. Curlew.

Number in A.E.F. from Curlew: 2.

A.E.F. Caseyville.

Number in A.E.F. from Caseyville: 7

"Navy Men".

Dyer, Charles L.

Sturgis, Ky.

Holt Kenneth

" "

Maddox Albert Clifton

Caseyville, Ky.

Madlin Andree Lee

Sturgis, Ky.

Riddle Clarence L

" "

Snell Chas. G.

" "

Truitt Dock

Caseyville, Ky.

Winstead James

Sturgis, Ky.

Distinguished Service Cross.

"Citation".

Capt. George Truman Phipps (Morganfield, Ky) 1st, Lt. 16th, Infantry.

For extraordinary heroism in action near Soissons France. July 19th, 1916.

Remaining on duty after his right elbow had been shattered by a machine gun bullet, he personally led a company to the left and front covering a flank that was entirely exposed, being then placed in charge of a battalion he led a successful attack upon a strong enemy position.

Showing a marked ability as a leader and inspiring his men by his bravery



**"French Croix de Guerre."**

Willie H. Shoulders (Waverly, Ky), 197980 Private, Company B., 1st Field Signal Battalion 2nd Division.

French Croix de - Guerre, with Bronze star - Under order #15,064 "D" dated March 28, 1919. General Headquarters French Armies of the East, with the following.

**"Citation"**

At Vierzy France, on July 18th, 1918 he rendered the most conspicuous service in constructing and maintaining the telephone lines under violent bombardment, with the greatest indifference to danger.

History of DeKoven  
Source of information,  
John Syers, DeKoven,  
Mrs. Joe Harth, Henshaw  
County Clerks Files  
Mrs. Clara Cragon, Henshaw,  
Miss Rose Boettger, DeKoven,  
Mrs. Louise Christian, Ypsilanta, Mich.

(written-Nov. 25-40)  
(typed - " 28-40)  
Reported by: -----  
Nannie G. Reynolds,  
DeKoven, Kentucky.

#### HISTORY OF DEKOVEN

DeKoven was in the original land grant of Peter Casey. Later surveyed by Nicholas Casey. The town was originally laid out by general plan of survey. First, second, third and fourth and fifth streets running Northwest to Southeast intereseected by Oak, Walnut, Hickory and Elm. Two additions have been made, a plat in 1884 which joined old DeKoven and extended toward the railroad. In 1917 other land was added to the South side, this addition contained two principle streets, Merritt, and Lyman.

Among the early surveyors was a Frenchman named John Willworth. He noticed the good prospect for coal and in 1839 with a few friends tried their luck at mining. He was a true lover of nature and the beauty of these hills and valleys made him think of his own beloved France. So the little mining camp was called DeKoven, meaning in French "Village among the hills". This name is very appropriate for this village, because it is surrounded on all sides by towering hills who seem in their mute way to be nature's own guard that stands watch over the remains

of a once prosperous mining center, where the ghosts of more prosperous days seem to haunt the present inhabitants.

The business section and a few homes are located on level ground but many houses are built atop the hills and others cling to or seem to be a part of the hill itself. One house in particular should be mentioned due to the fact of its being built in the opening of the old Mulford mine. The opening was covered by a large room that served as a cellar and meat storage room for the early inhabitants. This house was built in 1870 by Dr. B. M. Long. It is a large two story frame structure built in the side of a hill making both stories on the ground. One can walk in the upstairs apartment as easily as they can enter the downstairs flat, without climbing stairs. The other houses seem to cling to the hill sides and one would think <sup>by</sup> casual observation that the slightest wind would blow them off, this isn't true however, for these old houses were sturdily built and are still habitable although nearing a century in age.

The only public building in early days was the one room box structure that was used for religious, social and fraternal meetings and also for a school house. Among the early settlers were, Henry C. Spencer, who operated a hotel; Leopold Harth, a grocery and butcher shop; Ben McKinley, a harness and saddle

shop; James E. Wathen, a brick mason; Frederick C. Boettger, mechanic and blacksmith; Thos. J. Wolfe, ran a saw mill. Warren Howell was the first postmaster. John Ervin, J. D. Durrick, Henry Rehm, Alex Cragon, G. W. Noggle, John Watkins, Al Stevenson, John Whitehead, John Willworth, Jacob Livengauth, Wm. Oglesby, Samuel Piper, John Barumett, John Syers, Sam P. Sturgis, Dr. P. G. Kelsey, Dr. B. M. Long and Dr. J. D. Ames were connected with the mines of early DeKoven. Many of them were of sturdy German parentage and all belong to some religious and fraternal order. They were peace loving, hospitable and kind to one another so unlike most mining towns no rough element prevailed here. Like all Union County pioneers their chief indoor amusements were story telling, card playing, musicals and dancing. Outdoor sports were chicken fights, hunting, fishing, picnics and ball playing. The first team was called DeKoven's Gangal Team. Geiger Lake and Curlew Lake were ideal for camping and fishing and were often visited by the younger set. The dense under growth of the Ohio river bottoms near here made trapping for fur-bearing animals and hunting an enjoyable as well as profitable sport.

Transportation was done mostly by river. The mail was brought to Caseyville on the packet, a man met the boat taking the mail to Morganfield on a



horse and sack through DeKoven to Commercial. Often when the water was high the mail sack was strapped to the back of the riders and they swam their horses across Eagle Creek flats by true to tradition the U.S. mail went through recognizing no obstacle.

In 1847 several public wells were dug under the supervision of J. C. Penman. They were known as Penman's wells. All but one has been filled in with rubbish. This is the wind<sup>2</sup>lass type and is still doing service. It is about ninety feet deep and six feet wide, walled from top to bottom with large flat rocks. A wooden windlass reinforced by iron and a chain are used. The old iron bound bucket has been destroyed so each person who gets water must furnish their own bucket. This well is located near the center of DeKoven. During the year of 1883, Jim Bell then a small boy fell into this well. His terrified screams reached his playmate Minnie Eisenbarth, who was playing in a nearby yard. Minnie jumped the fence and lowered the bucket instructing the frightened child to climb in and hold on then she drew him to safety, before the members of either family were aware of what was happening.

DeKoven has within its boundaries a mineral well found by analysis to excel Dawson Springs water in medicinal qualities. People come from surrounding towns to get this water, some come from Evansville, Ind.

Mining always has been the chief industry. In 1847 a wagon mine was opened, another in 1848 and still another in 1849. All early ventures were failures. During 1849 a cholera epidemic broke out taking the lives of many, among them was the promoter of the mines, consequently closing it. The next try at mining was in 1859 when an opening was made and operated under the management of J. A. Shotwell, at this time mining began to get better. A stationary engine replaced mule drawn cars. Lack of capital caused low wages to be paid, low water in summer and ice in winter resulted in many shut-downs, causing the people to be very poor and always in debt. During these trying times Rev. Edd Thixon, a Methodist minister gathered data and sold to the author of the first Union County to obtain funds for the maintenance of his family and to carry on his religious work.

Post Office established June 13th, 1871.

In 1872 a group of Eastern capitalists obtained a charter from the Kentucky legislature to organize a company known as South Kentucky Coal Co., later changed to Ohio Valley Coal and Mining Co., with Dr. P. G. Kelsey as vice president and general manager. They bought the Shotwell mines and continued operations. Dr. Kelsey was a man of wide experience and realized the vast possibilities here in this coal field, if only he could find an outlet for Union County's immense supply of coal, but after many unsuccessful attempts to interest capitalists in

building a railroad through Union County, he realized it was an impossibility for the time being. He then turned his attention to an improvement program.

The present method of transporting coal to the river by mule drawn cars was too slow, the supply wasn't equal to the demand. A road bed was built high enough to be clear of flood waters. About one mile of miniature track was laid from mine to river. A dummy engine placed on the track Tom Byron was first engineer, Capt. Daniel Finnie had charge of river fleet and tipple. Mining was proven to be a profitable business. The usual run per day was 1300 bu.

DeKoven was the first town in Union Co. with a railroad leading from its  
limits to a designated place. Dr. Kelsey, realized as never before the need for a rail road through Union County and he continued to seek other capital than his own. So in 1881 Capt. Sam Brown a wealthy mine owner of Pittsburg Pa., who was already planning to build a R.R. from Evansville, Ind. to Princeton, Ky., which has now become a part of the Illinois Central System, became interested in Dr. Kelsey's scheme to conceived the idea of the O.V.R.R. He underwrote bonds for the building of this road. He wanted to make a coal line to connect the rich coal deposits of Kentucky with the Ohio River, his expectation being, that with the building of a road he would develop large mines along the route. This plan was not realized at once and hardly during Capt. Brown's connection with the road,

but he lived to see his earlier dreams of the possibilities of a country traversed by the railroad, realized in the fullest degree in the organization of the Cumberland Iron and Land Co. in 1886 with offices in Sturgis, Ky. Shipping facilities on the river at Caseyville, furnished proof of the wisdom in contemplating this prospect of a vast coal corp., with outlet by river and rail and mines in the interior of Kentucky. The slow growth of the Ohio Valley R.R. and the backward development of the country through which it passed was all that prevented the realization of Capt. Brown's design, with reference to the possibilities of the railroad, but the country and railroad have since proven his designs were logical. During 1883, when the actual construction of the road began between Henderson and Corydon, Capt. Brown, was in the zenith of his successful business career. He gave his personal attention to the details of building the road. After it was in operation, Capt. Brown, was its first president, and for a time paymaster, remaining in active control for several years.

The old South charter was amended by Kentucky legislature in 1886 and became known as Ohio Valley Railroad Co. Capt. Brown resigned as president. Dr. P. G. Kelsey became president and general manager. Other directors and officers of the O.V.R.R. Co. were Jordon Giles, Sec-tres, C. C. Genung, asst. supt. S. L. Campbell, auditor, Sam and Harry Brown, James F. Clay, S. H. Lambert and Auther Cary.



Capt. Sam Brown, was born in Pittsburg Pa., son of William Brown. He inherited most of his wealth from his father, but through his own efforts he enlarged the coal and boat business to the vast concerns they had become at the time of his death. Beside being a business executive of rare ability, he was an enthusiastic turfman. He maintained stables and stock farms at Brownville, Pa., and Lexington, Ky. At the latter place he bred some of the finest race horses that have ever appeared on the race tracks of our country. He also owned and operated a large fleet of barges and boats the tow boat Sam Brown that plys the Ohio River was named in his honor. He was rated a multimillionnaire at the time of his death, which occurred in 1905 at his home on Squirrel Hill in Pittsburgh, Pa. (I mention Sam Brown, because he built Union County's first railroad).

Previous to 1877 the Masons of DeKoven were attending lodge #168 in Caseyville, Ky. Frederick C. Boettger was elected worshipful Master Dec. 27, 1874 serving one year. In June of 1887 this lodge moved to DeKoven. Meetings were held in the one room school house. They began thinking of a new lodge home of their own, so plans were drafted, funds raised for the purchase of a building site. Oct. 8, 1877, Lot #11 in Block #12 in DeKoven was obtained by deed from James and Isabella Love. Some of Mr. Loves fine apple trees were cut down so the Masons could build where they wanted to. They began at once to grade and prepare

the ground for the foundation. Most all of the work was by man power. Rocks were obtained from a rock quarry one fourth mile away. The rocks were loaded on the sleds and drawn by the men themselves, to build the chimneys and foundation. Some of the members had a saw mill, others had timber while a few gave cash donations. They had very little money at their disposal, but plenty of willing hands to work, so by cooperating with one another they soon completed a two story frame structure. The entire upper story being devoted to lodge work, while the lower story was used for civic and social gatherings. The upkeep of this building was partly financed by rental fees. It was strongly made and has been preserved through all these years and stands in 1940 a silent tribute to the Masons of early DeKoven.

An F. & A. M. Lodge was organized on Nov. 25, 1878. A petition filed with the U. S. Court Clerks Office and application applied for a charter for this lodge. This charter was granted the same year. Evans Davis was first worshipful master, Anthony Jones, Senior warden, Cal Durrick, Junior warden, Dr. J. D. Ames, Sec. Frederick C. Boettger was elected Worshipful Master Dec. 27, 1887, serving until 1894. Then he was re-elected and served until 1904. C. M Yates also served the lodge in this capacity for a number of years. Shortly after the F. & A. M. Lodge #577 was organized, Dr. P. G. Kelsey organized the Alida Commandery naming it for his wife and daughter, this being the second commandery in America to be

named for a woman. In its early history this lodge was the only one in this part of the State that could confer the high degree of Masonary. A decline in membership due to members moving away, dying etc. has caused the commandery to be moved to Sturgis and later years the chapter also. However an active Mason Lodge still exists here.

In 1881 DeKoven concert band was organized under the leadership of G. W. Noggle, with twelve other members, but/<sup>due</sup>to lack of cooperation it disbanded. But as a good band is always in demand, it was reorganized in 1884. The members of the band were strikingly dressed in Navy blue with buttons and braid, and when on concert rode in an ornamental band wagon. Their first public appearance, was at a 4th of July pionic in DeKoven in 1885. This band was one of Union County's best musical units.

As plans for the completion of the railroad went forward the people were in a very progressive mood and began much talk of a new school building. So in 1885 a school committee was appointed to raise funds with which to start a building. A plan for the giving of 4th of July pionic under the auspices of the school committee was agreed upon. After three successful years they had obtained money enough with which to start building. Dr. Kelsey gave a substantial cash donation. He was given the old one room school house in exchange for rough lumber with which

to build the other school building.

Work progressed rapidly on the R.R. in 1885 a large freight depot was completed and a passenger depot was in process of erection. In August 1886, the first train passed through DeKoven. This now was a busy little town being a division of the O.V.R.R. Co. with offices here. At this time there were about sixty houses, Post Office, large drug and department store, owned by the company and several privately owned stores and places of amusement approximately 250 people lived here. A revival was held in 1886, which continued for several weeks resulting in so many converts that the membership of the Union Church grew so large that they left the one room school building and held services in the Masonic Hall.

In 1888 Dr. P. G. Kelsey in behalf of the O.V.C. & M. Co. conferred by deed four lots in the new addition of DeKoven to the trustees of DeKoven common School District #33. Namely, John Watkins, John Barumet and William Oglesby. Soon a neat frame building 40x60 feet was completed. It had a belfry and contained an auditorium 35x40 feet, and asst's room 16x13 feet, library 12x13 feet besides two small 8x20 cloak rooms. This was a great improvement over the old school building.

This prosperity continued until Shotwell Mine closed. A new opening was made in 1894. This mine was named #9. It was located one mile from the old mine which



was near the Rail road. This necessitated an extension of the dummy line, the building of a new tippie at the mine, opening and enlarging of the old one on the rail road. All other mines had been aired by furnace, this became mechanically aired by fans. In 1903 the mine owners began a general system of improvement, not only in the extensive colliery itself but upon the dummy line, river fleet and general equipment. The company was making huge profits and as always had the peoples welfare in mind. They were planning for the large force of miners in their employ to have regular and profitable employment. New and better homes were built.

During the year of 1903, the First Baptist Church of DeKoven was organized and began holding services in an old store building given them by the O.V.C. & M. Co. (for more information see article on First Baptist Church)

In 1905 three-fourths of an acre of land was deeded by Dr. W. R. Parke and wife Eliza, and Alex Cragon and wife Elora, to trustees of DeKoven Graded Common District #33. (see article on school). These trustees were, Illa Ames, Sam Piper, Fred Banks, Fred Syers and Alex Cragon.

This same year, 1905, the Church of Christ was built. (see article on church)

The Baptist and Methodist congregations could no longer worship together in a congenial manner. In 1909 the O.V.C. & M. Co. gave the abandoned school building to the M.E. Church for their place of worship. (see article on church).

The Pittsburg Coal Co. of Pittsburg, Pa. bought all mining properties in 1911 and continued their profitable operations through a period of six years. During the early years of the world war, when coal mining was in its most profitable era - the mines were operating day and night to supply the great demand for coal.

In Nov. 1917, the Madison Coal Corp. of Chicago, Ill. took charge of mine, changing its name from #9 to #11. The daily run was on an average of ninety three tons. They began to enlarge and modernize all mine property. Modern machinery was installed inside the mine, on the tippie and in boiler room. Up to date houses were built and old ones repaired. In early part of 1917, the American Red Cross work under the supervision of Miss Rica Rehm and Miss Carrie Pogue, did a wonderful work here. Having no facilities for a sanitary work room they were not allowed to make bandages, however they went over the top in a big way knitting sweaters and socks for the boys at the Front and in making clothes for the Belgian children. The Madison Coal Corp. gave an entire days run of coal, while all persons employed by the company gave a days work to the Red Cross fund. J. F. Whitsell was chairman of the Sturgis Chapter, of which DeKoven was a part.

As this prosperity continued it seemed that at last Old DeKoven would be a great mining center. Then came the awful flu epidemic in the fall of 1918,

which greatly decreased our population. Only a few families escaped a visit from the grim reaper. The three doctors who lived here all became ill. Doctors from nearby towns came into our town to assist us until they too were stricken. People were dying at such an alarming rate that the President of the Coal Company, A. J. Morehead, conferred with the State Board of Health asking for Medical aid. A doctor and two trained nurses were sent here. They began to improve sanitary conditions and placed all infected people under a rigid quarantine and soon the dreadful disease was checked.

Undaunted by tragedy the people were still progressive. Houses were in great demand, land agents began to buy unproductive farm lands and sell it for town lots and the building boom began. Many beautiful homes were built, larger and better business houses were erected, besides the large general store owned by the Company there were ten other business houses. Three churches, large two story brick school building, three barber shops, Post Office, a Bakery, Skating Rink, two halls, Pool Room, Ice Cream Parlor, Public Tennis Court, Moving Picture theatre and various other places of amusement. Population was approximately 1100.

In April of 1924, a new wage scale had to be made (as this always was a Union Mine). There were three hundred men on the company's pay roll, which

amounted to \$40,000 every two weeks. Tonnage per day averaged 1600 tons. No one could possibly know that one man's impudence could cause such a tragedy to this town, that was to follow the wage scale parley. The overhead expense of producing coal from this mine being so great and competition so keen from other nearby mines that it was impossible to pay the wage scale demanded by the Union men. When mine operators and Union delegates failed to agree one radical man, insulted the President of the Coal Company, resulting in the closing of all mining activities. Selling of all mining equipment and property. Coal rights were leased to the West Kentucky Coal Company, of Sturgis, Ky. Mine opening sealed, and all that remains today to signify that this was ever a mining center are parts of the boilers, a few torn down coke ovens and a few scattered slack and ash piles. The land and houses that were not sold until 1930, were bought by Hope and Croit Yates. Property so depreciated in value, that a house that cost \$3,000 to build in 1923, was sold for \$275.00 in 1940. People were forced to leave DeKoven and seek employment elsewhere. Population began to decline to such a degree that in 1935 the high school was taken away and students are forced to go by bus to Sturgis, Kentucky.

During the flood of 1936 and 1937, this entire community was isolated from the rest of the world. Flood waters crept into a few homes, but receded before any



serious damage was done to property. Several families were forced to vacate.

The town was without mail for some time. The only way one could leave town was by boat. People in the lowlands near DeKoven suffered considerable property damage and loss of live stock. Men worked night and day through the first week of the flood trying to save live stock, corn etc. from flood waters.

As the railroad put the river traffic out of business, so did the transfer trucks and buses injure the railroad. In 1938 the I.C.R.R. moved their depot and freight house from DeKoven. The large water tank and turntable had been moved several years before. What had once been a division of the railroad now is only a flag station. Population had decreased to about one tenth of former years and ninety percent of the present inhabitants are dependent on the WPA and other Government aids, for their maintenance.

In 1935 a farm to market road was built, funds were solicited by citizens and the Union County Fiscal Court also assisted in this work. This is known as Old DeKoven Road, starting in DeKoven near Boettger's Hall and extending to highway #85, about one and one half mile of road. In 1939, a part of another road was completed and graveled. In 1940 a spur was built to extend to the Post Office, intersecting the old DeKoven Road, in DeKoven, forming a "Y," which is a very pretty

sight in summer. This road has been completed and partly graveled and is known as the DeKoven-Curlew and Caseyville Road, as it extends to Curlew and connects with highway #30 in Caseyville. When a few minor details are finished and the grading completed this road will be accepted by the State as a highway, thereby completing a chain of highways in Union County. All of the roads have been made possible with funds sponsored by Union County Fiscal Court.

We find quite a difference in the good roads of 1940 compared to the muddy roads of 1924. During the winter of that year, J. E. Reynolds, teamster was obliged to use four large draught horses to pull one half wagon load of flour from Sturgis to DeKoven. The roads were so muddy it was impossible to get a car through. If the citizens of this place wanted to go any place in their cars they had to leave them parked on highway #35 walk a distance of one and one half miles. If a doctor was called he too had to leave his car and walk or have some one meet him with a horse. The citizens of this community should indeed be grateful for the good roads they now enjoy.

In 1939, an electrical line was completed through DeKoven and people who desire can now enjoy the convenience that electricity brings.

The first school house was built in DeKoven in 1847 by the citizens. Located

on a hillside near the central part of DeKoven about the old Penman well. It is built of rough lumber and the cracks have been stripped. This school building was 20x40 feet, one room, with a stove in the center. A pulpit or rostrum was located in the west end of the building. It was two steps high so the school master could see all that was going on in the school. A platform one step high, was in the east end for the use of the assistant teacher. The writing boards (as they were called) extended the entire length of the building on one side. A rail was placed at the bottom on which to place the pencils. The seats were crude wooden benches, with plank tops and backs. Miss Rose Boettger, Mrs. Hattie Demey, Will and John Syers, say they attended school in this building.

When the new school house ~~xx~~ was completed in 1888, the citizens also had to build it. They traded the one room school building for lumber to start the new building. Hence this building became the property of the Coal Company, Misses Urla Hagan and Ellen Birch were the last teachers to teach in this building. The Reelus Denny family now occupy the old school house as a residence.

Sullivan and Surrounding Country,  
Source of information,  
Old residents.

(typed-12-6-40)  
Reported by: ---  
George T. Brown,  
Clay, Ky. R. 1.

Sullivan and Surrounding Country.

Copy sent  
for fuller  
material

Sullivan did not exist and hence was not mentioned in the old History of Union County. One of the first centers in this district was on the old Wheatcroft road near the place belonging to the late S. W. T. Wallace. There was a store and at one time a postoffice at this place, this office was named Eberly. We know as mentioned in the article on Bethany Baptist Church that the Betheny and the New Harmony Churches considered locating and merged the two chueches and building at this place but these plans miscarried and the churches at pond Fork and at Rock Springs were built instead. The other center of this community was the Lindles' Mill on the road to Caseyville.

The people of this section were interested in the Railroad question and there was a tax ~~on~~ bonds voted to build a railroad. This was most likely Caseyville and Lindle's Presinct some time in the eighteen hundred and seventies. The work was undertaken ~~from~~ Granger-town in the general direction of the post office at Eberly, but after a bit of work and some disasterour losses the project ended. One of these losses was the burning of the mule barn and mules at Granger-town. This proposed site would have missed the present location of Sullivan, but it was never used. There is a part of the Old Railroad Bed still in existance on some of the Popular Ridge and George Davis Farms. The question of the settlement of the bonds was in court for a number of years and was finally compromised at twenty five percent some forty years later, which with the interest amounted to more than the original bonds.

Sometime later another effort was made to build a railroad. A line of track had been laid previously from Henderson to DeKoven, and plans were made to extend this line on through Marion and thence to Princeton.



The right of way was given by John F. Quirey and Mr. McGraw into what is now Sullivan on condition that the railroad be built, Deed Aug. 10, 1882. The survey was made and the work completed to the crossing at Sullivan and halted for a time then once more work was started and the road completed. This place was known as Quirey Station. A deed acknowledged the completion, ~~was~~ made in 1887.

At this time there were only the scattering farm houses and the Quirey School house at the village of Sullivan. The railroad had opened up a new opportunity and in 1887 A. M. (Mike) Sullivan bought a tract of timber to ship out, 1188 acres from the Smallwood estate. A brother Frank Sullivan ran a store here at Sullivan, probably as a kind of commissary for supplies for those working in the timber. And it was for these men that the name of the place was changed from Quirey Station <sup>to</sup> of Sullivan.

There was a Presbyterian Church established near what was then the Lindle's Mill by 1866. In the deed at that time it was known as the Nb. Pleasant Presbyterian Church and had Hugh Nunn, Wm. W. Berry Geo. H. Whitecotton and John F. Quirey as trustees. With the coming of the railroad the community center changed to the village of Sullivan and in 1899 the church was moved to the hill here in Sullivan where the frame building still stands and is still used for worship. ~~Thextrusteez~~  
~~xxxxxxxtine.~~

A Baptist Church was established here in 1902. A nice frame building was erected and the church has become one of the leading churches in this part of the Ohio River Association. It now has its pastor's home and has a pastor Rev. Z. T. Connaway, for half time work. He spends the remainder of his time with the Zion Baptist Church at Pride.

The old school has been long since torn down and a new school has been built at a new location. The first eight grades are still taught here. The high school pupils were accustomed to go to Sturgis for years and then for about two years they were transported to Pride High school, but when Pride Highschool was discontinued, they again were sent to Sturgis. This time the bus was there to take them each day.

This little town, which was never incorporated, has been very favorably served by the construction of the highways. The U. S. #60 one of the first roads built in the county, passed through the town. State Road #85 turns off here off U. S. #60, toward Wheatcroft and Clay thence to U. S. #41 near Providence. Another State highway #141 runs from here through Pride and Boxville. These roads assure year round connection in every direction.

There are many business houses located here for a town of this size. There is a nice frame hotel and since the regular hotels disappeared it is now run as a tourist home, and Dr. Rich Parke, the only Physician has his office here. Mr. George Nunn has been in the general merchandise business for years and is still here with a good stock of goods and since his son James is with him, the business is known as George Nunn and Son. Mr. Whitecotton has another stock of general merchandise and a record of many years business in Sullivan. Mr. T. E. Hammack has been in business here for some time and now a new and modern place at the intersection of the highways and operates a service station and sells a few groceries. Mr. Tom Brantley has one of the most modern auto repair shops in the county and does a good business in both the repair and selling of new automobiles. He has been located here for a number of years. Charlie Christison has been a blacksmith for a number of years and still has his shop and his mill for the grinding of corn. There are also two restaurants and a road house located here.

The bus lines pass through Sullivan and a ticket office is maintained at one of the restaurants.

Sullivan is the home for men and women of many trades. It has and operates its own telephone system. It has a post office and rural carrier takes the mail out into the surrounding country. It is the home of men who own <sup>TRUCKS</sup> used for hauling for the surrounding farms and mines.

WPA

Bird C. Greer - 1/31/41  
D. Mitchell (Typ.)

GEIGER'S LAKE

Frederick Geiger was the father of Judge John Samuel Geiger, who came to Union County in 1841. Frederick Geiger had the honor of building the first steam flowing and grist mill ever built in Union County. "This mill was located on the bank of Geiger's Lake, made during the rebellion, as the place where Colonels Adam R. Johnson, of the Confederate Army, and General Jas. Shackelford, of the Federal Army, fought a great battle on a small scale --- "The federals were driven away and General Shackelford was wounded, etc."



✓ WAVERLY

Incl. Big springs  
(Waverly) mill.

Waverly is an unassuming community rather sparsely but indifferently spread out on both sides of the ribbon of concrete that curves into the town from the east and cuts it in half. It has the placid and informal qualities as well as the physical appearance of a village, and as such it has always kept <sup>one</sup> ~~out~~ foot firmly planted on the near-by farm. Frame houses of plain

construction predominate, giving the town a simple and unpretentious air.

*Practicality has ever been its keynote, and beauty for*  
~~There is something practical, even utilitarian, in the conduct of affairs,  
*its own sake has been subordinated to utility,*  
~~and beauty has never been cultivated as an ideal.~~~~

Even in the rosiest days Waverly and the surrounding agricultural <sup>estates, several</sup>  
~~seldom strove for magnificent~~ community were never ~~memorially-minded~~. Several residences of impressive

size and construction were built in the Waverly precinct and in the adjoining Hitesville precinct many years ago, but <sup>*the chief goals have been*</sup> the acquisition of more land

and the maintenance of a well-stocked, well-tilled farm ~~has been the chief~~

<sup>*One of*</sup> ~~goal.~~ The farm of Jim Will Hancock, one of Union County's two master farmers,

is located in the Waverly agricultural community (See Economic Development).

There are numerous fine farms nearby, such as those of P. S. Roberts, *Mary S. Hite,*

F. W. Cruz, Ed. Rapier, Tom Denton, and Robert Denton.

The town bears the marks of its age and decay as lightly as it accepts

the new home or the latest mechanical innovation. There is rust on the metal sheeting of the old flour mill, and there are blighted, washed spots over on the railroad side of town.. But the town seems to ignore such things. The leisurely work-a-day world, with ~~all its virtues and vices~~ and its prosaic accomplishments, seems to suffice as a way and ~~as~~ a philosophy of life.

~~It matters little to Waverly that it~~ has declined somewhat in population in recent years, <sup>but</sup> ~~for~~ that ribbon of concrete, which has taken something out of <sup>the town</sup> ~~it~~, also has carried it to the very doorstep of Morganfield and has linked it with Henderson, and Evansville, Indiana. The town has settled back content to be what it now cannot help being - "just a place to live."

Electricity (1925), ~~dial telephones (1935)~~, and a traffic semaphore <sup>and dial telephones (1939)</sup> (1938) have in recent years introduced a modern note into the <sup>easy</sup> tempo of the community's life.

Waverly, too, has its memories of more ambitious and more prosperous days. When the price of hogs was up, and the corn crop was bumper, Waverly blossomed, for the farmer could pay a good price for the comforts of life. Winter days brought the leading planters around roaring grate fires to talk of making Waverly a more prosperous place, of building a church, and of bringing in a big mill. It was during these years that many of the town's more

lasting features were developed. The railroad was woven into the picture of Waverly more than half a century ago and St. Peter's Catholic Church has given this picture some dignity for three decades, while a bank has given it prestige and more independence.

A Although Waverly is not a place of ~~historic events or~~ imposing buildings, there are those innumerable touches of personality, both of the past and present, that complete the picture by adding variety and depth. In the early days there was that colorful ex-slave, "Old Dread," who used to plow with a horse and a cow hitched as a team. The two front rooms of the log house which he built are still standing and are part of the home now owned by C. J. Cruz.

Today there is that picturesque character "Uncle Lish" <sup>E. J. Hancock</sup> who for months went around Waverly, Corydon, Morganfield, and vicinity salvaging bottles and tin cans to build his odd fairyland house. Uncle Lish, who once started a "tin-can house" in Desert Center, California, made his rounds in his picturesque rig of a <sup>four</sup> ~~two~~-wheeled <sup>my cart</sup> ~~cart~~ pulled by either one or all of his three goats, Jiggs, Maggie, and Rose.

The Waverly community is the birthplace of Charles J. O'Malley and Ormsby McKnight Mitchel (see Biographical Sketches), and for many years it was the home of Drs. Henry Frank Rhea and Herman Rhea, Jr. Dr. Frank Rhea

was a provincial poet whose efforts, marred by literary affectations, frequently appeared in newspapers in this section of the State. His brother, Dr.

Herman Rhea, Jr., who first practiced in Waverly after receiving his medical degree, distinguished himself in his profession and later moved to <sup>Louisville</sup> ~~Chicago~~.

Waverly was founded about three-quarters of a century ago on part of what was known as the "Big Spring Tract" which extended along Casey Creek and from the creek to Smith Hill. The "Big Spring" for which this tract was named was the principal source of water for many of the farms before wells were dug.

It is still used, for watering stock, <sup>on the J. C. Roberts' farm,</sup> and the farm on which it is located is ~~now owned by Corbett Nally.~~ <sup>Its location, just out of town, probably determined the ~~site~~ of the <sup>Byrne and Byrne mill</sup></sup>

The history of Waverly extends back to a much earlier date. Even before a hut had been built the place was known as "The Crossroads," because the Henderson-Beaver Dam Road crossed the Madisonville Road here.

When John and Arthur Donnelly and their mother <sup>Y</sup> came along the Madisonville Pike peddling their wares about 125 years ago, they pitched their tent at the crossroads here and set up store. The brogue of the old country was still thick on their tongues. Business must have been at least fair for they soon <sup>h</sup> built a little log cabin for a store and then a log house where they lived for about two years. During this time the <sup>C</sup> ~~crossroads~~ was known as



"Donnelly's Store." The Donnellys, however, sold out after several years, and sought greener pastures and the crossroads was then called "Paynesville," for Jack Payne (1776-1858), an early Maryland-born settler.

It was not long after the Donnellys set up store that the crossroads began to show signs of developing. Nathaniel Floyd built a small log house opposite Donnelly's Store and used it as a store for a year or so. Both the Floyd and Donnelly properties were later bought by Samuel Willett. They were then sold to Horace Bell, who used Donnelly's store as a cabinet shop. Wash Abell of Marion County, the community's first blacksmith, next bought the old Floyd store and used it as a blacksmith shop. The home which he <sup>here</sup> built/is still (1941) standing and is occupied by George Smith and his sisters. After a few years this property was sold to John Smith, who succeeded Wash Abell as the town's blacksmith, and Gilky Rice. Thomas Smith, son of John Smith, assisted by John Scott and Samuel Hosback, also did the blacksmithing of the community for many years. The Smith heirs still own the property but the old blacksmith shop is gone.

Another business house was built here about 1835 by Dr. John S. Cheshire, a son-in-law of Jack Payne. The timber for this building was hand-hewn and whipsawed. It was <sup>so</sup> solidly built, wind-proof house, and was later bought

by Jim Roberts, the only tailor in Waverly's history. Mr. Roberts rented it out as a store. *It was torn down by <sup>George</sup> Smith in 1939 -*

About 1840 <sup>6</sup>Dr. William Dunham, the community's first physician, settled here. Others of the profession who in subsequent years followed him were: A. J. Abell, Herman Rhea, Sr., Herman Rhea, Jr., a Dr. Boyle, J. T. Jenkins, T. J. Newman, R. N. Alvey, J. B. Nearey, J. E. Johnson; and today Waverly has Dr. W. H. Hardesty and Dr. T. P. Gray.

The Big Spring tract of land, upon which the upper section of Waverly is built, was thrown on the market in 1869 or 1870 with Hugh <sup>McElroy</sup>~~Hix~~ as the agent. The land was divided into farms of 125 acres, and at the ~~Crossroads~~ <sup>Crossroads</sup> thirty lots of one acre each were laid off and sold to the highest bidders.

<sup>McElroy</sup>Mr. ~~Hix~~ wanted to give the budding town a suitable name for the post-office which it would have. The Crossroads was too commonplace, and he decided upon the name of Waverly, presumably for Waverly Greathouse, a New Orleans nephew.

The place remained without a post <sup>office</sup> for four or five years after its establishment. The mail was usually delivered to <sup>Morganfield,</sup> ~~St. Vincent Academy,~~ and on Sundays Father Durbin would bring it to Sacred Heart Chapel and distribute it. It was not until 1875 that the people of Waverly took steps

and succeeded in having a post office established.

The future of the town seemed rather promising in a modest way shortly after it was laid out. E. A. and D. O. Byrne were shipping a steam-powered flour and cornmill from St. Mary's in Marion County. Its destination was their father's farm at Highland Church, but a group of Waverly citizens, seeing the advantages of such a mill for the town, raised a thousand dollars to pay the owners to locate it in Waverly. It was known as the Big Spring or Waverly Mill during its operation, although the company name was Byrne and Byrne. The Big Spring Mill was converted into a distillery in 1874, but after making fifty barrels of apple brandy it went into bankruptcy. Somewhat later it was again used as a distillery and about a thousand barrels of whisky run off, when Sylvester Pike, Uniontown banker, had to take back the property for the fourth time. Mr. Pike sold the property again and the machinery was moved to Morganfield where it was <sup>used in</sup> ~~known as~~ the Kelsey and Cromwell Mill.

The blunt historian of the Historical Atlas of Henderson and Union County, who dismissed DeKoven as "an unimportant post office in Union County," wasted no words on the Waverly of 1880. His summary of the place reads: "Waverly, in the northern part of Union County, tri-weekly stage to Henderson, Morganfield and Uniontown, contains three general stores, two drug stores; two

blacksmith and wagon shops; one fairly flourishing mill and one shoe shop."

One of the druggists was G. T. Mattingly who, in 1878, took over what is said to have been the first drugstore in the town, opened some years before by Dan Brown.

The center of town and its growth in a particular section has changed several times. There was first of all the crossroads, and then, after Alex and Charles King built a store in the last lane that branches right off of US 60 approaching Morganfield, the town grew along what is still known as Main Street. Later, when Austin, Biggs, and Franey bought and enlarged a building on the old highway, it became the main store and the center of town. When the railroad arrived and a depot was built about a quarter of a mile away, the town developed in this section. As William Thomas Barker, the local historian until his death in 1939, related: "When the railroad came through the residents moved the town where they could watch the trains roll by." It was at this time (1906) that the department store owned by Joe Austin and Dr. J. E. Johnson was moved from the old part of Waverly to a point nearer the depot. Later, as highway travel became increasingly common, and therefore important, the center of the town shifted over to its present location, along US 60. The department store mentioned above moved



once again. - for the third time. It occupies a brick building facing US 60, and is now operated by W. R. Johnson.

Waverly had undoubtedly grown slowly through the years when the first separate population figure of 179 was given for the town in 1880.

In 1884 Phillip Greenwell started a small cornmill which, during its many years of operation, changed hands as frequently as the Big Springs or Waverly Mill. The biggest event during the 1880's was the arrival of the Ohio Valley Railroad from Henderson on March 31, 1886. The railroad did not boom the town, however. No newspaper was started, no mines were opened, and no new agricultural industries established. The population increased to 241 in 1890, a normal gain during the decade 1880-90. A flourmill was established in the town in 1896 by Tom Culver. It was later owned and operated by his two sons, Ed and Ran, and finally burned.

Waverly was still little more than a crossroads, however, until the first decade of the twentieth century. The establishment of a bank in 1902 gave the town more definite character. The favorite story of old Mr. Barker was the origin of this bank:

" It was in my drugstore that the bank of Waverly was born. The cashier  
[Sylvester Pike]  
of the Uniontown bank kept after me to take in some deposits for his bank.

He gave me a small safe and my drugstore became a branch of the Uniontown Bank. We didn't change the store furnishings at all. I just did the banking business over the same counter that I used to hand out the pills. But people in Waverly liked the arrangement so well that nothing would do but what they must have a bank of their own. So we organized one.

The bank was first located in the crossroads section of town. Four years later, after the town had moved off and left the bank, the directors decided it might be a good idea if they moved the bank too.

Two years after the founding of the bank a coal mining company was organized by a home committee, consisting of Dr. J. E. Johnson, president, William T. Barker, secretary, and other prominent citizens including Samuel R. Hamilton, John T. Payne, and John B. Cruz. Ben Hancock superintended the sinking of the shaft and R. A. Gardner became the engineer. Sam Pike, magistrate of Waverly at that time, also played an important part in the undertaking.

The difficulty of obtaining coal in bad weather, when the roads were sometimes almost impassable, was partly responsible for the opening of the

mine. During the peak of business the mine employed about a hundred men.

*It was sold first to a Chicago enterprise, and later resold frequently, and*  
*it*  
*Finally* went into "the red" because of mismanagement and was closed in

*after the cyclone of that year blew down the tippie and other buildings.*  
1923. It was operated again in the mid-twenties but was finally abandoned in 1929.

Until 1910 the people of Waverly and the surrounding country - predominantly Catholic - attended Sacred Heart Church at St. Vincent Academy, a short distance from Waverly. A year or so before, several men in the community, including William T. Barker, John Payne, and Samuel R. Hamilton started the movement which led to the establishment of St. Peter's Church and School in Waverly. On the evening of February 8, 1923, shortly after the church and school had been freed of debt, they were burned. A new plant combining church and school was begun almost immediately, and in the summer of 1924 was dedicated. Father P. J. McNeill, who *had come* ~~came~~ to Waverly in 1909 as the congregation's first pastor, left the parish later in *1924.* ~~the same year.~~

Among the recent (1937) business establishments opened at Waverly is a hatchery. The incubators, which have a capacity of 10,000 eggs, are located on the Wheatly farm one mile from Waverly. The machine-age has contributed only one new type of business to the town - the ubiquitous service station, of which there are four in Waverly.

The population of Waverly in 1910 as given by the U. S. Census, was 311, and during the next decade it increased to 475 - the largest population in its

history. During the next two decades it decreased from this figure to 445 and then, in 1940, to 323. Perhaps that decline is the "handwriting on the wall." Practically every crossroads has had its day. Many of them never developed beyond the general store, while others grew up and boasted a flour and cornmill, a church, a graded country school, and the stores in keeping with the community's size and wealth. Waverly has all of these and also most of the modern conveniences. It is a crossroads that partly succeeded. The farm land surrounding it is still good; then, too, Waverly remains a "good place to live."

OK. M. B. Pike



Return Friday

Location of Places Described in Book  
Round Anvil Rock.

1. Cedar House was the home of the first County Judge, whose name in real life was Broadway, however the name Robert Knox is used in the Book.

In later years a settlement became known as the "Cedars". This was located on the Ohio River one half mile west of Hitesville. As late as 1867 Dennis Bartholomew O'Malley built a frame cottage there and his widow and son lived there for a number of years.

2. The Log Temple of Justice was the first court house in the County. It was located on the public square across the street from the site of the present court house, where the Peoples Union County Bank and Trust Company now stands.

- ✓ 3. Anvil Rock is located on I.C.R.R. one ~~fourth mile~~ and one fourth miles from DeKoven, Kentucky.

4. The River described is near Uniontown, Union County, Kentucky.

This information reported by Nannie G. Reynolds, DeKoven, Ky.